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A HISTORY

OF THE

TOWN OF FLATLANDS

KINGS COUNTY, N. Y.

BY

Rev. ANSON DUBOIS, D. D.

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BROOKLYN, N. Y.

1884.





# HISTORY

## OF THE

# TOWN OF FLATLANDS.

BY REV. *Amson DuBois*, D.D.

**SITUATION.** The Township of Flatlands lies upon the northwesterly shore of Jamaica Bay, and includes a number of islands within the Bay.

It is described, in ancient patents, as "lying between the Bay of the North River and the East River;" the former designation being applied to Jamaica Bay, inasmuch as the North River was regarded as discharging into the ocean at Sandy Hook. The principal islands within the bay, belonging to the town, are: *Barren Island*, at the extreme south; *Bergen Island*, mainly in the salt meadows; and *Ruffle Bar*, at the eastward. Flatlands contains some 9,000 acres of land, about one-third of it arable, under high cultivation.

**Names.** The name *Flatlands* is descriptive, and applied, originally, to the whole of the flat country eastward from Prospect Park Ridge, all the way from the Narrows to Hempstead. Gov. STUYVESANT says: "I found on my arrival [1647] the Flatland so stripped of inhabitants that, with the exception of the three English villages, Hemstede, New Flushing and Gravesend, 50 boweries and plantations could not be enumerated."

The first plantation established in the town was called Achtervelt, because it lay *after*, or *beyond* the "Great Flats," *the field*, in approaching it from New Amsterdam. This name, however, did not attach to the township, which was designated by its early inhabitants *New Amersfoort*, after the city of that name on the river Eem in the province of Utrecht, in the Netherlands, whence Wolfert Gerretse, one of the patentees, and several others of the early settlers, immigrated. Colloquially it was termed "The Bay"—or, in Dutch, "*de Baaije*"—from its situation upon Jamaica Bay, and it is so named in many local documents.

The terms New Amersfoort and Flatlands were, for awhile, interchangeable; but in course of time the descriptive word became here localized as a proper name.

**Aboriginal Inhabitants.** The subdivision of the great Algonquin family of Indians inhabiting Long

Island, living in this town, was the Canarsie, with its principal village at the place still bearing that name. Extensive banks of broken clam-shells at Canarsie and Bergen Island attest both their numbers here, and the great extent to which the manufacture of wampum, or Indian money, was carried on here.

Their social condition must have been very low at the settlement of the town. Verazzano, who, in the service of Francis I, in 1524 entered a large bay in latitude 41° North, supposed by some to have been the Bay of New York, gives a very flattering description of the natives of the adjacent shores; and that of Capt. Hendrick Hudson, in 1609, is not unfavorable. These men, however, could hardly have known them so well as Rev. Jonas Michaelis, the first clergyman of New Amsterdam, who says: "They are as thievish and as treacherous as they are tall, and more inhuman than the people of Barbary."

The Dutch travelers, Dankers and Sluyter (1673), give us a description of an Indian house at New Utrecht, which was probably a type of their dwellings elsewhere.

It was sixty by fifteen feet, the frame rough posts and poles, and covered with reeds and bark. An open space the whole length of the roof, at the ridge, allowed the smoke to escape from fires built upon the earthen floor for the six or eight families inhabiting it. It had no windows, but was furnished with a low narrow door at each end. Their implements for domestic use, agriculture, and fishing, were few, and one of our travelers gives us a pen-and-ink sketch of an Indian woman of that period, drawn from life. It is not a pleasing picture, and gives the impression that intercourse with the whites had debased rather than elevated their character.

There is no evidence, however, of unjust or oppressive treatment of the Indians by the whites in this town. Their lands were taken only by purchase, and no title was considered good until the Indian right had been legally extinguished. The two races lived peacefully together; and, when the murder of inoffensive savages



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took place at Pavonia, and Corlaer's Hook, in 1643, the people "dwelling at the Flatland" gave evidence of humane sentiments by "immediately expressing dissatisfaction at this sudden and unexpected slaughter." But the white race grew stronger, and the Indian weaker, until about 1830, when *Jim de Wilt*, or "Jim the wild man," died in his wretched hut at Canarsie, the miserable remnant of the once proud possessors of these fertile lands.

**Settlement of the Town by the Dutch.** At its settlement by the whites, Flatlands was divided into salt meadows, forest lands and prairies. The prairies, or open plains, were peculiar to this town, and doubtless account for its very early settlement. BERGEN says: "The most tempting locality on the west end of Long Island, for natives of the low and level lands of Holland or Belgium, who were inexperienced in the clearing of forests, were the flats in Flatlands and Flatbush; miniature prairies, void of trees, with a dark-colored surface soil, similar to that of the western prairies; which had been subject to the rude culture of the natives, and were ready without much previous toil and labor for the plow."

The early patents refer to "The three flats of Long Island." These were *Van Twiller's* (central at Ave. B and 5th street), *Van Corlaer's* (central at Ave. C and Troy Ave.), and a third called "*The Little Flats*" and described as "The westernmost of the three flats on Long Island." This "Little Flats," Dr. T. M. STRONG locates at the intersection of Flatbush ave. and the town line. But, while that locality was so called, the true locality of the "Little Flats" referred to in the Land Patents, as distinct from the Township Patents, was, without doubt, at the point where Hudden and Van Kouwen-Hoven formed their settlement, near the Flatlands Reformed Church, at the intersection of Flatbush and Flatlands avenues. Beside these three flats there were maize lands, under rude Indian culture, at Canarsie Point and Bergen's Island. Finally, there were the "Great Flats," or "Flatlands Plains," covering a large portion of the western part of the town. Probably, most of the Great Flats was under more imperfect Indian cultivation than the other maize lands; but they were destitute of trees, and we have reason to think that considerable portions of it were made to yield the scanty crops of savage agriculture. The extent of the Great Flats would be roughly described by a line drawn from the *Pardegat* westward, to near the intersection of the Manhattan Beach railroad and Ocean avenue; thence to the residence of Jeremiaah Ryder, near Nostrand and Ave. M; thence to a point on Mill Lane, some three hundred yards beyond the Methodist Church; thence to the Neck road at the Dutch Church, and along said road to Ave. I and 45th street, and thence to the place of beginning. The "Indian path" from Fulton Ferry to Bergen Island passed through the centre of this great plain, and is

shown by the old line of Flatbush ave. and Mill lane. As a rule, the black soil shows the portions of the town originally open, while the gray soil shows that part covered by the forests.

There can be no doubt that the earliest whites in Flatlands located at, or near, the point where the southerly course of the Kings highway bends suddenly westward at J. B. Hendrickson & Son's store. Uniform tradition, the language of early patents, the *debris* of Holland brick, and the proximity of burial-place, church and school, all prove this spot to have been earliest occupied by Europeans. It was probably called "The Little Flats," because separated from the "Great Flats" by a belt of timber along the low ground, a little northeasterly of the Church. This elect prairie was particularly eligible, because it lay close upon the salt meadows (much depended on in those early times for cattle-feed); and, still more, because it was convenient to "the Bay," whose fish, oysters, and wild fowls, afforded our primitive inhabitants so valuable a part of their year's provisions.

Some rude settlement was probably formed here as early as 1624. In evidence of this we find Brooklyn and Amersfoort are mentioned as Dutch settlements, in 1649, along with the statement, "Our freemen have resided on that Island down from the very first." In 1660, the West India Company say, "Long Island was taken possession of by planting Amersfoort," and other places are named after it. In all the early enumeration of Long Island towns, Amersfoort is placed first, doubtless from its priority of settlement. Gov. Stuyvesant gives important testimony as to its settlement in 1624, by speaking, in 1664, of Long Island as "Now peacefully possessed some 40, some 30, and the least 20 years." If we accept this statement, and recede forty years from 1664, we shall find Amersfoort "planted," and "peaceably possessed" by its white inhabitants in 1624.

Our early people were themselves fully aware of their seniority, in this county, and are interesting witnesses of it. In a statement before the County Court, at Gravesend, 1666, in a certain dispute with Flatbush, they say:

"You may be pleased to take notice that much we might plead before them with respect to antiquity and the first settlers and settlement of this place; the great brunt of troubles, and loss of goods, and lives of men that was gone through with and lost, as some of the English who shared therein with us can testify."

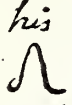
These statements, taken in connection with the attractive conditions of the lands and waters of this township, are deemed sufficient to fix the date of settlement by the whites as early as 1624.

**Early Land Patents.**—The first recorded purchase of lands in this town took place June 16th, 1636, when Andries Huddle (or Hudden) and Wolphert Gerretse (Van Kouwenhoven) bought of the Indians, and obtained the next year from Gov. Van Twiller a





patent for, the westernmost of the three flats on Long Island, called by the Indians *Caskateuc* (or *Kaskutenu*). "Van Corlaer's" and "Van Twiller's Flats" were purchased the same day. On this purchase, according to

Wolfert Gerretse <sup>his</sup>  Van Kouwenhoven  
mark

TUNIS G. BERGEN, "a plantation called 'Achtervelt' was established, on which, prior to July 9, 1638, when an inventory was taken, they had a house set around with long round palisades, the house being 26 feet long, 22 feet wide, 40 feet deep, with the roof covered above and around with plank; two lofts, one above another, and a small chamber at their side; one barn 40 feet long, 18 feet wide, and 24 feet deep; and one *bergh* with 5 posts, 40 feet long. The plantation was stocked with 6 cows, old and young, 3 oxen and 5 horses." The lands of Hudden and Van Kouwenhoven are described as extending "From a certain meadow, or valley, westward to and into the woods." That is, as we understand it, the patent covered all the western portion of the town, from the Paerdegat and its outlet westward across the "plains" to, and into, the woods beyond them, or to the Gravesend line. We have another description incidentally given, when, in 1652, the Company directs the Governor to annul parts of certain land claims, and among them "The Great Flat, otherwise the Bay, on Amersfoort Flat, with the lands adjacent claimed by Wolfert Gerretse and Andries Hudde, containing full 1,000 morgens, not a fiftieth part of which they are able to occupy." Hudde and Van Kouwenhoven, however, never relinquished possession, though the freeholders endeavored to compel them to do so under this forfeiture. By the account of the contest which thus grew up between the patentees and the town, we are able to locate most of the original bounds of the patent very definitely. A jury of the Court of Sessions, at Gravesend, in December, 1679, sustained the patentees; but disputes as to where the patent-lines really were, continued until 1695, when the heirs of Elbert Elbertse (who had acquired the original patentee rights), and the freeholders of the town, mutually bound themselves to accept as final the decision of a commission to locate the lines. These commissioners say: "The westernmost bounds or limits of said Elbert's patent joins to the easternmost lines or limits of Gravesend, one patent comprehending in it the lands of Jan Albertse (Terhume), Jan Van Dyckhuysen, and Thomas Willet, and so from the northward corner of the said Willet, joining to Gravesend, along the westernmost side of the Flats of Flatlands." A still later commission—for this old difficulty was hard to settle—carries the last-mentioned line "Northerly till it cuts the line which runs westerly from the meadow or valley on the east side of Flatlands town, including the said

meadow; being bounded north by Flatbush land and west by Gravesend line." It is probable that the Wyckoffs and a few others in the southerly part of the town held directly from the Government; but it is clear from the above that the patent of Hudden and Van Kouwenhoven covered all the lands from the Paerdegat and its outlet to Gravesend, and northward to the Flatbush line.

Hudde never resided here, and sold portions of his patent right to Wolfert Gerretse until September 16th, 1647, when all his remaining interests were thus disposed of.

Achtervelt had assumed the appearance of a village. The residence of the elder Van Kouwenhoven, with his barns, &c., stood near where J. B. Hendrickson's store now is. The house was large, with two stories in the roof, in thorough Holland style. Van Kouwenhoven's second son, Gerret Wolfertse, lived near by, in a clapboard house, with his young family, Wellem Jan, Neeltje, and Marritze. This important centre of the settlement was inclosed by stout palisadoes and furnished with a guard of soldiers. We have no evidence that any hostile attack was ever made upon it, but there was always more or less danger from the large number of Indians in the immediate vicinity. At the time of which we speak, the Wyckoffs, the Stoothoffs, the Van Nostrants, the Tennessens, and some others, were permanently located here, and by the time the Dutch church was organized, in 1654, there were prominent in the town the families of the Schencks, the Ammermans, the Strykers, the Van Sigelens, the Romeyns, the Bruynses, the Davises, the Van Dyckhuysens, the Van Arts Daalens, and doubtless others.

The estate called Achtervelt fell, after Wolfert's death, to his second son, Gerret Wolfertse, who married Altje Cool of Gowanus, and died about 1645. His widow married Capt. Elbert Elbertse (Stoothoof), whose name is the most prominent of all in the early history of the town. Elbert gained possession of the whole of Gerret's estate by agreeing with the guardian of Gerret's children to pay the debts on the estate, bring up the children, teach them to read and write, and pay them each 200 guilders, except Jan, who, being lame, was to receive 300. This agreement did not include the separate interest of Gerret's widow; for, by his will, made after her death, Capt. Elbert directs 2,000 guilders to be paid to Jan, and an equal amount to be divided among the other children of Gerret (viz.: Willem, and Neeltje, wife of Roeloff Martense Schenck, and the children of Marritse, deceased, who had married Capt. Stevense Voorhees) as "due them from their mother's and grandmother's estate."

**Town Government.**—In the early settlement, when all were surrounded by savages and the families were mutually dependent on each other for protection and comfort, no precise form of municipal government was needed. The laws and habits of Hol-



land regulated the affairs of this feeble offshoot. Titles of land were derived from the Governor and Council in New Amsterdam; and cases in law, did any arise, were adjudicated by the same authority. The time came, however, when local courts were necessary. Gravesend, settled by Lady Moody early in 1643, received from Governor Kieft a charter in 1645; and, in it, authority to form a body politic and a local court of three magistrates, with final jurisdiction in the amount of fifty guilders. Flatbush had been settled by direction of the Governor in 1651, and three years later, March 6th, 1654, was favored with a local court of six magistrates in connection with Flatlands, sitting three-fourths of the time at the former place and one-fourth at the latter. But this quarter of a loaf, tardily given, the people of Flatlands thought little better than no bread, and requested the Governor and Council to give them a court of their own. One was accordingly established, March 31st, 1661, to consist of three magistrates, the first being Elbert Elbertsen, Pieter Cornelissen, and Simon Jansen. These officers were elected annually by the freeholders and confirmed by the Governor. They were called Schepens, and the constable was called a schout.

There existed in this town, for one hundred and fifty years, a close intimacy between Church and State. The civil magistrates must be of the Reformed religion, and the officers of the church were *ex-officio* officers of the town; the elders being trustees of the school of the town and of the lands held for the use or benefit of the school and the church; while the deacons had charge of the poor, and of all the funds collected by tax, or by contribution, for their support.

Flatlands grew into a municipality without formal legislation or authorization of any kind, except in its land grants. It was thirty years after its settlement before it enjoyed any privileges of a local court, and then only in connection with its more favored neighbor, Flatbush; and thirty-seven years before it could boast one of its own, of the most primary jurisdiction. Its charter as a township was even longer in coming. An English Governor, Nicolls, did its people this tardy justice, October 4th, 1667, without assuming to create a municipality, but expressly recognizing its existence. Omitting verbiage, the charter is as follows:

"Whereas, there is a certain town in this government, situate in the west Riding of Yorkshire of Long Island, commonly known by the name of Amersfoort, *al's* Flatlands, which is in the occupation of several freeholders and inhabitants who heretofore have been seated there by authority. \* \* \* Now for a confirmation. \* \* \* I, Richard Nicoll, Esq., \* \* \* have granted and do grant unto Elbert Elberts [Stootherff], Govert Lockermans, Roelof Martense [Schenck], Pieter Claes [Wyckoff], Willem Gerrits [Van Kouwenhoven], Tho. Hillebrants, Stephen Coertsen [Voorhees], and Coert

Stephens [Voorhees], as Patentees, for themselves and their associates \* \* \* all that tract \* \* \* and other parcels purchased of the native Indian proprietors, or others, within these limits, viz.: From their western bounds, which begin at a certain creek called the Stromme Kill [Garretsen's Mill Pond] they stretch to Filkin's or Varken's Hook on Hog Point, which is also included within their limits. [This Point was about the intersection of Avenue J and East 83d street, and had the meadows belonging to New Utrecht township northeasterly on to Vischer's Hook, or Canarsie Point.] Then from the limits of Middlewout *al's* Flatbush \* \* \* beginning at a certain tree standing upon the Little Flats, marked by commissioners, October 19th, 1666, a line stretching southeast to Canarsie. It includes within its bounds several parcels of land, particularly a tract granted by Governor Petrus Stuyvesant to Jacob Steendam and Welken Jans, November 12th, 1652, and transferred to Flatlands November 20th, 1662. Also lands at Canarsie heretofore manured and planted by consent of the Indians, and on April 16th, 1665, bought for a valuable consideration by the inhabitants of Flatlands, together with the meadow or valley at Canarsie, divided April 20th last year from the town of Flatbush by a line half a point northerly from the mouth of the [Fresh] Creek. To have and to hold, \* \* \* and that the place of their present habitation shall continue, and retain the name of Amersfort *al's* Flatlands. \* \* \*

Given \* \* \* at Fort James, New York, October 4th, 1667.

MATTHIAS NICOLL, Sec'y.

RICHARD NICOLL.

*Elbert Elbertson Stootherff . 1660*

Facsimile of Elbert Elbertsen Stootherff's signature.

*Roelof Martense Schenck . 1680.*

Facsimile of Roelof Martense Schenck's signature.

*mark  
Pieter Claes Wyckoff . 1675.*

Facsimile of Pieter Claes Wyckoff's signature.

*Steven Koers Voorhees . 1675.*

Facsimile of Steven Koers Voorhees' signature.

The indefiniteness of this charter immediately occasioned difficulties as to boundary lines at Canarsie; and early the next year (February 3d, 1668), Governor Lovelace issued another charter, confirmatory of the preceding, and granting certain provisions in the purchase of lands at Canarsie. Still another charter was granted by Governor Dongan, March 11th, 1685, to Elbert Elbertse (Stootherff), Roelof Martense (Schenck), Pieter Claes (Wyckoff), Willem Garretsen (Van Kouwenhoven), Coert Stevensen (Voorhees), Lucas Stevensen (Voorhees), and John Tenmissen, for themselves and associates, according to the tenure of East





Greenwich, they paying annually 14 bushels of good wheat in New York. But none of the charters defined the town boundaries intelligibly, and acrimonious disputes leading finally to litigations, in 1661, between Flatlands and Flatbush, in regard to the Canarsie meadows, continued for the long period of thirty years. After the matter had occupied the attention of successive courts, and of several commissioners, and of the Governor, a joint commission from the two towns, in May, 1677, agreed on and staked out a line across the Canarsie meadows, adding to their report this important item: "All manner of difference between them to this day to be forgotten and forgiven." But the miasma of the marsh must have soured the temper of the people; for, two years later (June, 1679) the Flatlanders prosecuted their Flatbush brethren for trespass at Canarsie, and obtained judgment in £10 damages. In 1691 the judgment was still unpaid, and was then reaffirmed and execution ordered. Flatbush thereupon appealed to the Governor and Council. We have no evidence that the judgment was reversed; and, if not, there must be now due to this town from Flatbush the original £10, with costs, and some two hundred years' interest.

Flatlands was recognized by the State as a town, March 7th, 1788. The *Supervisors*, for the last hundred years, have been the following: 1783, 1785, 1786, Ulpianns Van Sinderin; 1784, Abram Voorhees; 1787-98, Capt. Nicholas Schenck; 1799, 1800, Hendrick I. Lott; 1801-15, Johannes Rensen; 1816-39, Gerrit Kouwenhoven; 1840-43, Andrew Emmanus; 1844-53, John A. Voorhees; 1854, John A. Wyckoff; 1855, to the present time, John L. Ryder.

Thus, for a century past, the highest political office of the town has been held by ten men, some of them through terms of 9, 14, 23, and the present incumbent, 27 years. Our people are contented when they are well served, and the civil service in Flatlands is not in need of "Reform."

**Early Inhabitants.**—The following names are from the list of those who took the Oath of Allegiance to the British crown, in 1687; with the date of arrival in this country of the foreign-born:

Pieter Claesen Wyckoff, 1636; Gerret Pieterse Wyckoff, Claes Pieterse Wyckoff, Hendrick Pieterse Wyckoff, Jan Pieterse Wyckoff, *natives*; Elbert Elbertse (Stoothoff), 1637; Gerret Elbertse (Stoothoff), Hans Janse (Van Nostrandt), 1640; Roelof Martense Schenck, 1650; Jan Martense Schenck, 1650; Jan Roelof Schenck, Martin Roelof Schenck, Derick Janse Ammerman, 1650; Jacob Stryker, 1651; Ferdinandes Van Siekelin, 1652; Christoffe Janse Romeyne, 1653; Ruth (or Rut) bruynsen, 1653; William Davies, 1653; Jan theunis Van duyckhuys, 1653; Simon Janse Van Arts Daelen, 1653; Cornelius Simonen Vanarsdalen, Pieter Cornelius Luyster, 1656; Thys Pieter Luyster, 1656; Pieter Pieterse Tall, 1657; Jan Broower, 1657; Dirk Brouwer, Hendrick Brouwer, Dirk Stofflese, 1657; Stoffle, Dirkse (Langstraet), Adriaen Kuene, 1660; Court Stephense Van Voorhees, 1660; Albert Courten Van Voorhees, Luycas Stephense (Van Voorhees),

1660; Jan Stephense (Van Voorhees), 1660; Abram Williamse, 1662; Johannes Williamse, 1662; Evert Janse Van Wickelen, 1664; theunis Janse Van Amach, 1673; Gerret hansen (Van Nostrandt), Gerret Hendrickse bresse, Wellim Gerretse Van Couwenhoven, Gerret Williamse Van Couwenhoven, Anthony Warnshaer, William Williamse boreklo, Jan Albertse Terhune, Pieter Nevins, Pieter Manfoort.

**Residents in 1687, and previously.**—Gathered from Town and Church records:

Gerret Seerjersy, Hendrick Freemensen (here in 1670); Gerret Gerretsen, Abram Joerese (Brinkerhoff), Jan Cornelis, Jan Barrentsen (Van Driest), Albert Albertse (Terhune), died 1672, and Vaereyck Fliksen, all here in 1672; William lobbortse, Wm. Williamse (Wyckoff), Gerrit Remers, Barent Jureyaensy, Thunis Helebrantsy, here in 1673; Klaes Kornelesen, Barent the Tailor, Sawaern Jans, Hans Janse (Van Nostrandt), Hendrick Hernanze, Widow of Frederick Ebbcott, here in 1674; Widow of Gerraen Keest, Willem Gansen Van Barkelo, Klaes Smit, Widow of Geromus Boeck, Willem Kuyken, Jan Snedeghyer, here in 1675; Abraham Joris-en (Brinkerhoff), Fookie Hansen, 1679; Cornelius Barentsen, Simon Jansen (Romeyne), Simon Jorisen, 1680; Albert Terhune, Jr., Lawrence Koeck, Hendrick Aswerus, 1682; Jan Hansen (Van Nostrandt), Johannes Machgilssen, Jan Manfordt, Vls Homes, Jammes Willer, William the Shoemaker, De Fris the tanner, Jacob Fardon, Jan Albert Terhune, 1685; Rut Joosten (Van Brunt), Cornelis Simonsen Van

*Rutger Joosten*

Facsimile of Rutger Joosten's (Van Brunt) signature.

Arsdalen, Joost Rutjen (Van Brunt), Johannes Holsa, Jan Kilement a mason, Master Toon, the Doctor, here in 1687; also 1677-1685; Bruno Hendrickse, Rutgert Brunoos, Tjeltje Reimers (Wizzelpfinnig), Pieter Tall, Jan Poppe, William Stryker, Gerret Renmerts, Jan Kiensen, Dirckye Roelfsen, Pieter Hendricksen, Albert Steven (Voorhees), Steven Coerten (Voorhees), Martin Pieterse (Wyckoff), Luykas (Voorhees), Teunis Jansen, Swaen Jansen, Adam Michilse, Dierckie Williamse, Lourens Cornelise, William Huelt.

The taxable property in Flatlands in 1676 amounted to £3,966, 13s., and the taxes were about £20 yearly. The number of acres of land under cultivation in 1680 was 1,661.

The following names appear in the **Census of 1698**. The first figure following a name is the number of *whites* in the family, and the second figure shows the number of *negro slaves*:

Gerret Elbert Stoothoff, 7, 4; Jan Teunis Dykhuys, 5, 5; Roelif Martense (Schenck), 6, 4; Coert Stevense, 5, 2; Gerret Wyckoff, 5, 2; Hend<sup>k</sup> Wykof, 2, 2; Dirk Jans Amerman, 9; Adriaen Kenne, 8; Dirck Langstraet, 5; Jan Kiensen, 2, 1; Alexander Simson, 10; Jan Hansen, 5; Pieter Nevins, 9, 1; Jacob Tysse Lane, 6; Helena Aertsen, 5; Simon Jantz Van Aersdaelen, 5, 1; Cornelis Simontz Aersdaelen, 8, 1; Willem Gerrittz Van Couwenhoven, 8; Aernont Viele, 2, 2; Jan Albertz ter hennen, 8, 2; Jan Brouwer, 8, 1; Thunis Jantz Amack, 7; Ferdinand Van Sigelen, 7, 4; Claes Wykof, 8; Jan Wykof, 4, 1; Willem Bruynen, 7, 4; Adriaen Langstraet, 1; Lucan Stevense, 12, 4; Pieter Pieterse Wyckoff, 1; Hendrick Brouwer, 1; Albert Amerman, 1; Pieter Van Couwenhoven, 4; Martin Schenck, 5, 2; Jan Stevense (Voorhees), 12, 1; Pieter Monfoor, 8, 1; Steven Gaerten (Voorhees), 5; Rutgers Bruyn, 9.









B 48x50, A 83, V B \$2,075; Jeromas Lott, A 70, V B \$1,750; Nicholas Schenck, Jr., A 30, V B \$660, R Flatlands Neck; Adrian Hageman, A 5, V B, \$100, R house value \$30; Cornelius Stoothoff, B 42x50, A 38, V B \$855, R road to Flatbush; Thomas Ellsworth, B 30x36, A 35, V B \$787½, R road to Flatbush; Jeremiah Ellsworth, A 14, V B \$315, R road to Flatbush; Wilhelmus Van Nuys, A 4, V B 150, R road to his own property; Ben. Bennet, A 16, V B \$280, R road to his own property; Luke Kouwenhoven, Jr., A 50, V B \$1,250.

#### Social Condition of the Early Inhabitants.—

The early population of this town consisted of agriculturalists and artisans, plain, thrifty and religious people. The open land of the town attracted settlers nearly as soon as Manhattan Island was permanently occupied, and large numbers of newly arrived immigrants for many years continued to make it a temporary abode. A great many families upon the Hudson and Mohawk and in New Jersey trace their descent through permanent or temporary residents of this township; and Governor Stuyvesant speaks of this region as the only one which seemed to thrive under the severe trials of those times.

Their dwellings must have been very plain. Two of them survive after a lapse of more than two hundred years, and may serve as examples of the better and the more common sort; the first is the house at Crook's Mill, and the second the humble cottage in the corner of Theo. Bergen's field, near John L. Ryder's residence. Our people were the people of Holland transferred to Long Island. The salt meadows, the bay, and the level lands suited them. On the marsh the ditches dug by their hands are not yet filled up, and their descendants still go to those marshes for salt hay. On the arable lands the "dikes" may yet be traced along the principal lines dividing farms, once a sort of fond remembrance of their fence against the North Sea. The tiles still remaining upon the chimney pieces, at Crook's Mill and at Peter Remsen's, show, as fishing and Bible scenes, in decidedly Hollandish character. There are, even now, probably fewer changes in manners and habits of thought here, than can be found in any other part of the country. We have an interior view of early Flatlands given in *Danker's and Stryker's Journal* of 1679-1680, published by the Long Island Historical Society. The picture is not flattered:

"Monday, Oct. 2d, 1679.—We went after breakfast to the Bay. We did not find Jan Theunissen (Van Dyckhuysen) at home, but the father and mother (Elbert Elbertse Stoothoff and wife, whose daughter Jan married) bade us welcome and took us around into the orchards. We found the land in general not so good as at Najack (New Utrecht). Toward the sea is a piece of low flat land which is overflowed at every tide, while adjoining corn lands are dry and barren for the most part. Some of them were now entirely covered with clover in blossom, which we discovered in the atmosphere before we saw the fields. There is here a grist mill driven by the (tide) water which they dam up in the creek, and

hereabouts they go mostly to shoot snipe and wild geese. Behind the village inland are their meadows, now arid."

"Tuesday, 3d.—Nothing but rain: compelled to sit in the house, which was constantly filled with a multitude of godless people. This Elbert Elbertse being the principal person of the place, and their Captain, and having a multitude of children of his own, there was a continual concourse at his house."

A week later our travelers were again at Capt. Elbert's in the Bay. They write:

"While we were sitting there, Domine Van Sauren came up, to whom the farmers called out as uncivilly and rudely as if he had been a boy. He had a chatting time with all of them. He spoke to us, but not a word about religion. Indeed, he sat prating and gossiping with the farmers, who talked foully and otherwise, not only without giving them a single word of reproof, but without speaking a word about God or spiritual matters. It was all about horses and cattle and swine and grain; and then he went away."

The surrender of New Netherlands to the English, Aug. 27th, 1664, caused no material changes in the social affairs of Flatlands. The magistrates continued in office until the usual time of elections, when the newly elected took the oath of allegiance to his Majesty of England. The people continued to be free citizens, enjoying their lands and privileges as before; and the Dutch were to enjoy liberty of conscience in worship and church discipline, as well as their own customs concerning inheritances. The States-General gave Amersfoort, and some other towns near her, a sharp reproof for yielding too far to English blandishments about this time; and threatened their "severest indignation and displeasure" if they did not remain firm in their Dutch allegiance. The rebuke was scarcely just to this town. The whole of Kings County was perfectly defenceless, though harassed by daily threats of the English, and the men would not abandon their wives and children to defend those of New Amsterdam.

There was little to disturb the peaceful flow of events in this town for more than a hundred years before the Revolution. There was, indeed, at one period, some excitement in regard to the settlement of the pastors Antonides and Freeman, over the joint Dutch churches of Kings County; but, finally, all parties became weary of the profitless quarrel and both were accepted by all the churches in a better spirit. In this town the services and care of the church, the interests of children in the schools, and the daily pursuits of a rural population, made up the history of the months and the years. Large and healthy families gladdened parents' hearts and furnished work for their hands. New men from the old families, and with the old names, took the places of those who were laid to rest "in de kerk," or in the burial-ground beside it. In all these years, the people of this town were loyal to the British crown, and continued so, doubtless, to the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. They were not engaged in trade, were not excitable, were not ardent politicians or theorists, and were content with honest gains by the cultivation

NOTE.—Simon Voorhees and Abraham Terhune had houses of two stories, all the rest were of one story, and all built of wood. It is not known that a stone or brick house has ever been built in this township.



of their fields. Two months after the Declaration of Independence they passed under the power of the British army, and so remained until the evacuation of New York.

**Flatlands Neck.**—It is proper, at this point of our sketch, to speak of that portion of the township of Flatlands lying northward from Bedford Creek and bounded by Jamaica Bay, New Lots and Flatbush. At the time of the settlement of Achtervelt, the "westernmost of the Three Flats of Long Island," the lands of "Van Twillers" and "Corlaer's Flats" were also put under cultivation. It must, however, have been imperfect, as no concentration or settlement seems ever to have been formed in either locality. The Canarsie Indians were still numerous; and, with the exception of their maize lands and the flats above named, all that portion of the town lay in dense forests. The "Canarsie Woods" have been famous even to our day, and must have once contained an immense mass of heavy timber. The farmers of Amersfoort, coming with increasing population to need more land, hired land of the Indians at Canarsie, until from twelve to twenty cultivated portions were under the management of the whites. But this temporary arrangement was likely to cause trouble, though we have no record of any. However, to put matters into a safe position, the Indian title was extinguished and that fine portion of the town opened to the whites under the following contract:

On the 23d day of April was agreed as follows, to wit.: Wametappack, Sachem of Canryssen, and Ramieracy, Minnequahum, Camenuck, Panwangum, and Attewarum, lawful owners of Canaryssen, and the appendages thereunto appertaining, have agreed and sold to the inhabitants of the Town of Amersfoort, a parcel of land lying on Long Island, by and in the vicinity of the Village of Amersfoort, beginning at the west side of the "Muskyttehool" at a certain marked tree, thence stretching to where the end of the Flats comes by the two trees, situate on the north side of the said Flats to a certain marked tree; from thence to the Fresh Kill meadows, stopping at the path from the Great Flats to the Fresh Kill meadows and stretching in the Flats; with all meadows, kills and creeks therein contained, and that for the sum of one hundred fathom of white wampum, one coat, one pair of stockings, one pair shoes, four adzes, two cans of brandy, and one-half barrel of beer; with conditions that the purchasers once for always a fence shall set at Canarissen for the protection of the Indian cultivation, which fence shall thereafter by the Indians be maintained, and the land which becomes inclosed in fence shall by the Indian owners above mentioned all their lives to be used, to wit, by Wametappack, the Sachem, with his two brothers; all done without fraud or deceit. The 6th day of April, old style.

This is the mark of WAME X TAPPACK. Sachem.

This is the mark of & MINNEQUAHUM.

This is the mark of S ATTEWARAM.

This is the mark of A ORAMGSY.

This is the mark of V RAMMGERAEN.

This is the mark of E PANWANGUM.

This is the mark of V KAMENECK.

This is the mark of S WANACLYCK.

This done by me, the Constable, MINNIE JORNES.

The stipulated price was duly paid to the Indians on the day of sale, under the following valuation, viz.: wampum, 600 gl.; stockings, 6 gl.; coat, 60 gl.; shoes, 16 gl.; 4 adzes, 16 gl.; brandy, 8 gl.; beer, 15 gl.; total, 721 (\$418.40). The General Patent of the town, issued two years later by Gov. Nicolls (Oct. 4, 1667), includes the Neck, and thus gives a legal sanction to the title now acquired from the Indians. Most of the lands were the undivided property of the freeholders of the town, though small portions, including meadow lots, were in private hands. Nearly the whole of the neck was divided into lots of ten morgens, or 20 acres each, which were called "The New Lots of Flatlands." We have not ascertained precisely how these lots ran, except in a few instances. Stephen Schenck, an early settler at Canarsie Point, purchased a series of these lots running across the Point, and the nearest to the Bay. The lines of property at Canarsie, and especially the farm-lots of the Vanderveers, and Remsens, at the Neck, still give clear indications of this early division of the land into squares.

The equitable benefit to individuals to arise from these common lands when they became something more than pastures for young cattle, and especially when new residents settled in the town, became at length a difficult question. The only escape was to divide the land in severalty. Accordingly, on April 3d, 1705, a town meeting agreed to divide the common woodlands at Canarsie, and appointed Luykas Stevensen (Voorhees), Jan Terhunen, and Peter Nelius to carry out the management. Gerrit Stoothoff, Justice; Cornelis Van Arsdalen and Jan Amerman, witnesses; Jan Stevensen (Voorhees), constable. Nothing, however, came of this action, and the matter seems to have been left in abeyance until some years later. December 25th, 1717, was issued the following advertisement:

"WHEREAS, There is a certain tract of land \* \* \* commonly called De Baye's Neck or Flatlands Neck, and was given \* \* \* as per grant of Richard Nicolls, Esq., \* \* \* Oct. 4th, 1667, \* \* \* and afterward confirmed \* \* \* by Thomas Dongan, Esq., Mar. 11th, 1685. \* \* \* Therefore, wee William Gerretsen [Van Kouwenhoven], Lukas Stevense [Voorhees], survivors of the above named patentees, and Martin R. Schenck and Koert Voorhees, assignees of full shares of patentees, have mutually contracted and executed in writing \* \* \* for to Divide and Lay out the above said tract of Land \* \* \* on or near the 25th of March next coming, \* \* \* and the shares \* \* \* shall be drawn by Lots in the presence of Joseph Hageman, Jeronimus Remsen, and Samuel Gerretsen, indifferent persons nominated by us: \* \* \* and we forbid trespass."

One difficulty in parcelling out the common lands at the Neck to individual owners, arose from certain obligations touching inheritances, and the support of church and school, assumed by the early settlers. How important these were considered, and how necessary to be continued among the new comers, may be seen by the following action:





"Be it known by all persons that it is decreed by Patentees of the Town of Amersfoort, and by Assignees of full rights of Patentees, that the under named persons will take their lots on the following conditions: 1. That none of them shall have power to sell their lots or any part of the same to any person without at the same time selling to the buyer the house-plot attached to the lot. 2. They shall be held in addition to aid in maintaining the School, to help in the maintenance of the Preacher or Preachers, and School Master, and of bringing of firewood to the Preacher and Schoolmaster, all as may be determined and enjoyed by the congregation of the said Town, each person in proportion to his rights, and in proportion to his neighbors; under the restriction that if any of the undernamed persons shall refuse or neglect to observe the above Articles or Conditions, and to keep the same, or to bind their assigns to their observance, they shall be deprived of their apportioned lot or lots, and the same shall become the property of the Town."

"Done at Amersfoort, this 29th of April, A. D. 1719."

The persons named as receiving lots under the above conditions were: Jacobus Amerman, Johannes and Eva van Seikelen, Josias Drake, Cornelis Van Arsdalen, Abraham Westervelt, Jan Lucassen (Voorhees), Anna Terhunen, Jan Van Nays, Jan Auker, Steven Schenck, Isaac Amerman, and the "Heirs of Kierstede."

In further preparation for the eventful casting of lots, it was agreed that the common woodland, "to wit: the Neck, Fresh Kills Point, and Kanarsisse, shall be drawn in three parts," as above, and as appears on the following table. It was added: "The heretics their rights to have on the strip of land that lies in the rear of the Neck dwelling plots." The word *Kenters* here translated heretics is differently rendered. Hox. T. G. BEN-EN says: "The word *Kenters* in the original is by some translated 'Mechanics.' The word *Kether* means 'heretic.' *Kenter* not found in the dictionary. Dr. Strong (*History of Flatbush*) translates the word 'Mechanics.' We are not able to add anything to these authorities. It is certain that "The legal agents of all the patentees" could enforce whatever, in behalf of Church and School was "Determined and enjoyed by the Congregation of the Town;" and if any would not accept their portion on the above terms, it seemed liberal in those times to assign them a place "On the strip of land in the rear of the neck dwelling plots." *Kenters' Hook*, or, if we follow this translation, *Heretics' Corner*, is now found in the north part of Flatlands, adjoining, and mostly in, few Lots.

The division and assignment, by lot, of the Neck lands to each individual having rights in the patent, took place as follows:

"May 4, 1719.—A showing of the allotment of the divided land in the town of Amersfoort, to wit: the Fresh Kills point, the Neck, and Kanarsingh; numbered and done by the undersigned—Joseph Hageman, Jeronymus Remsen, and Samuel Gerretsen—pursuant to the charge of Lucas Steven-son, Martin R. Schenck, William Conwenhoven and Koert Voorhees, Patentees and assignees of full rights of Patentees. And each individual share in acres of the persons here under-named, as follows, to wit:—"

	Fresh Kills Point Beginning in rear of Peter Monfoort, to No. 26 and to the utmost point.		Great Division, Beginning in rear of Martin Rood of Schenck to No. 26.		Kanarsingh Beginning at Whore's Point at the woodland, and thence to the ad- jacent point of Kanarsingh.		Total Acres to each
	No. of Lot	No. of Acres	Lot	Acres	Lot	Acres	Acres
Lukas Stevensen (Voorhees)	13	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	7	40 $\frac{7}{10}$	8	4 $\frac{9}{10}$	55
Martin R. Schenck	4	12 $\frac{1}{2}$	24	59 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	75
Willem Conwenhoven	10	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	25	59 $\frac{1}{2}$	20	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	80
Koert Van Voorhees	17	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	59 $\frac{1}{2}$	9	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	80
Jan Terhunen	11	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	9	32	6	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	43
Martin Schenck	1	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	16	27 $\frac{1}{2}$	10	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	37
Hendrick Wyckoff	12	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	22	25 $\frac{1}{2}$	25	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	35
Pieter Wyckoff	5	7	11	29 $\frac{1}{2}$	7	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	40
Pieter Nevius	8	3	21	12 $\frac{1}{2}$	22	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	17
Albert Terhunen	18	4	23	18	13	2	24
Gerret Stoothoff	25	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	19	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	19	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	30
Dirk Amerman	21	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	20	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	15	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	30
Jan Amerman	16	4	3	18	21	2	24
Roeloff Terhunen	26	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	2	15	18	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	20
Auker Van Nuyse	7	2	10	12	4	1	15
Cornelus Coerten (Voorhees)	19	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	13	25 $\frac{1}{2}$	3	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	30
Cornelis Van Arsdalen	23	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	14	49 $\frac{1}{2}$	16	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	55
Abraham Lott	9	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	17	15	17	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	20
Pieter Monfoort	14	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	6	15	4	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	20
Gerret Hansen	22	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	12	15	11	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	20
Pieter Wyckoff, Jun.	15	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	18	25 $\frac{1}{2}$	26	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	35
Hermanus Hooghland	6	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	4	16 $\frac{1}{2}$	2	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	22
Jan Lucassen (Voorhees)	3	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	5	16 $\frac{1}{2}$	14	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	22
Jan Stevensen (Voorhees)	20	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	15	12 $\frac{1}{2}$	12	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	16
Gertrude Van Gelderte	2	2	26	12	5	1	15
have 3 lots, each 5 acres.							
Auker Janz Van Voorhees	24	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	8	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	12	$\frac{3}{4}$	9
							569

**The Period of the Revolution.**—When the British forces landed at Bath, in New Utrecht, preparatory to the Battle of Brooklyn, August, 1776, they soon made their presence known, and swarmed up over the country. "Before noon," an old lady, who saw them, used to say, "the Red Coats were so thick in Flatlands you could walk on their heads." They plundered nearly every house, especially those of the Whigs. The maternal grandmother of Supervisor Ryder used to tell of their entrance into her father's house in Gravesend. Her mother sent her ahead to open every chest and closet, so the soldiers would not break into them with their muskets. When, however, they seized her new bonnet, the girl's courage rose equal to the emergency; and, suddenly snatching it from them, she defended it so stoutly against threats and violence that they left the trophy in her hands. The soldiers entered the house of Elias Hubbard (father of the late Judge Hubbard), yet standing on Hubbard's Lane, and were furnished liberally by his wife, Margaret Lake, with milk, bread and butter, and, in fact, with all the edibles of the house. But, when they attempted to drive away her cow, she planted herself at the yard-gate and compelled them to desist.

At evening, after the landing, the British camp-fires were seen all along the road from New Utrecht to Flatbush. The main body passed by way of Gravesend. Earl Cornwallis pushed forward with the Reserves, and a detachment of Hessians also encamped that night at



Flatbush, all having passed through Flatlands. The tradition is, that Col. Kniphausen's horse, and perhaps his whole regiment, occupied the Amerman farm, now Jeremiah Ryder's. With this exception, no troops are known to have encamped here, or to have been quartered upon the inhabitants. A guard was stationed at Captain Nicholas Schenck's, at Canarsie Point, and another at Mr. Wyckoff's, Flatlands Neck, now the residence of John A. Wyckoff. The soldiers occupied the kitchen, and the southwest room of the house was used as a lock-up.

The services of the church, and of the common schools, were carried forward as if nothing unusual was occurring. Seventeen infants were baptized in the Flatlands Dutch Church, in the year 1776. This uninterrupted worship is the more remarkable, from the fact that the pastor was universally regarded as a decided, and sometimes over-zealous, friend of the American cause.

At the close of the war there was a celebration at Flatbush, by Whigs from the county towns. Flatlands was represented by four men; two of them were Abraham Voorhees (father of Hon. John A. Voorhees) and Elias Hubbard (grandfather of A. H. Hubbard). The British had left each of these two men one old horse, and these were each blind of one eye. The two imperfect horses were harnessed together on this jubilee occasion, and drew the patriots to Flatbush.

**Reformed Dutch Church of Flatlands**—There are but two Dutch churches in America older than that of Flatlands, viz., the Collegiate Dutch Church of New York, formed in 1623, and the North Dutch Church of Albany, 1642. The churches of Flatlands and Flatbush were formed on the same day, February 9th, 1654, by Rev. Johannes Megapolensis, pastor of the Collegiate Church, and their history will be found in the chapter of this work devoted to *The Ecclesiastical History of Kings County, from 1654-1800*. When, in 1654, a church was completed at Flatbush, at a cost of \$1,800, Flatlands contributed \$48. The first minister, the Rev. Jo. Theodorus Polhemus must have preached in Flatlands, in private houses, or in the school-house, for eight or nine years, until, September 12th, 1662, the people asked for the privilege of building themselves a church edifice, which was granted by the Governor and Council. The next year (1663) saw the enterprise completed. The erection of this early church by the unaided effort of a small community of poor settlers, in the midst of heathenism, was very creditable to them. They chose an excellent location, near their primitive settlement, and gently elevated, and which had been sacred from time immemorial as an Indian burial place. In form, the church was octagonal, with a belfry, and an inclosed portal called the Baptistry, or "Doopluisje;" the whole being covered, on roof and sides, with heavy spruce shingles, which were so durable as to have survived to our day. The people were, at first, summoned to wor-

ship by the sound of a drum, but in 1666 a subscription (which still remains in the archives) was circulated, and 556 guilders were collected for a bell, being more than 100 guilders in excess of subscriptions. The bell was probably imported from Holland, as in September the next year 7 gl. is paid for "a rope for the bell." The appearance of the church in the year of its erection is complimented in the words of Capt. Scott: "This is a handsome place and has a fine church." And this, coming from a violent enemy, we accept as true.

This church continued in use the long period of 141 years, until 1791, when it was torn down and a new church built. The pulpit of the original church was of the "wine-glass" style, had a sounding board, and was furnished with a "bench." The hearers' seats were not luxurious. They were "benches." In 1697 Evert Van Weckelin was paid 150 gl., or \$60, "for making benches in the church," and repairs to the benches were made from time to time long afterward. Chairs were in very moderate use. In 1716, 8 gl. were paid "for 2 chairs in the church," and, in 1785, 18s. for a similar purchase. One of these chairs was for the magistrate, and the other for the *Yef vrom*, or minister's wife. The latter, purchased in 1685, is now preserved in affectionate honor at the Flatlands parsonage.

The church edifice was repaired and enlarged in 1762, after it had been in use 99 years. The enlargement consisted in advancing the three front sections of the original octagon, leaving the new front square and the full width of the building. The original seating capacity must have been 125 or 130. In 1762 the 122 regular sittings, or "places," were held as follows:

Cornelius Voorhees, 5; Steve Schenck, 4; Johannes Lott, 7; Hermann Hooglandt, 5; Wm. Kouwenhoven, 5; Roelof Voorhees, 4; Fammetie Ditmars, 3; Roelof Van Voorhees, 4; John Van Der Bilt, 5; Jeremiah Van Derbilt, 1; Abraham Voorhees, 5; Folkert Sprong, 2; Abraham Dorye, 4; Coustyn Golneck, 1; Peter Wykof, 3; Johannes Lott, Jr., 3; Wm. Van Gelder, 3; Derrick Remsen, 4; Henrick Lott, 4; Jan Schenck, 5; Wilhelmus Stoothoof, 7; Jan Ouke, 1; Martie Ouke, 1; Samuel Garreson, 1; Bernardus Ryder, 2; Albert Terhune, 4; James Holbert, 2; Fernandus Van Segelen, 1; Barent Vanderventer, 1; Abraham Schenck, 1; Callyntje Janse, 1; Garrett Wykof, 3; Getore Heyn, 2; Jan Amerman, 6; Annatie Wykof, 5; Petrus Amerman, 3; Jacob Ouke, 1; Helena Ouke, 1; Eisack Selover, 1.

The following are the *new* places:

Pieter Wykof, 2; Derrick Remsen, 1; Abraham Dorye, 1; Christoffer Hoogland, 1; Johannes Lott, 3; Garret Kouwenhoven, 1; Wilhelmus Stoothoof, 2; Garret Wykof, 2; Abraham Voorhees, 1; Coustyn Golneck, 2; Henrick Wykof, 1; Joosh Van Nuys, 2; Nicholas Schenck, 1; Jan Ouke, 1; Folkert Sprong, 2; Roelof Van Voorhees, 1; Evert Seerman, 1; Jan Van Der Bilt, 1; Marten Ouke, 1; Abraham Van Geldrin, 1—28.

It will be seen that the total number of sittings actually taken, in 1762, was 150, by 53 persons. According to a list, in 1767, 41 persons hired 148 sittings. It would seem therefore clear that the first church build-





ing, even when enlarged, would not accommodate many more than 150.

The sittings in church went with the farms, and were often named in deeds; and, so late as the present pastorate, pew-rents have been paid by agents of property where no use was made of the sittings, simply because the pew went with the property. In 1716 it was ordered that a non-resident might hold his sittings by due payment of rent. Otherwise he lost them after "one year and six weeks." He might sell them to a resident of Amersfort, but not to a non-resident. In 1794, at the building of the new church, the limit was reduced to six months.

It became at length apparent that Flatlands needed a new church edifice. Influential families advocated it. The father of Derrick and Johannes Remsen, among others, urged that the church was too small and falling to decay. A town meeting, called March 4th, 1794, resolved to build a new church and to raise money for the work by the sale of the town lots, hitherto held for the benefit of the church. A committee appointed for both purposes inserted the following notice in a New York paper, March 8th, 1794: "Notice is hereby given to carpenters that proposals will be received by Abram Voorhees, Rem Hageman and Wm. Kouwenhoven, for building a church at Flatlands, 60 feet by 40 feet, timber and materials to be furnished by them."

This notice was responded to by Smith & King, builders, who contracted to finish the work according to the specifications for £400. On March 26th, John Baxter, vendue master, sold "the Neck woods, the farm and commons belonging to the church." May 6th, the carpenters began taking down the venerable church, and finished May 27. July 29th and 30th the new church was raised. November 2d the *debris* of the old church was sold. November 12th a town meeting was held, when it was resolved to use the moneys of the Poor Chest to finish the church. The pews were distributed by lot on December 20th, and on the 13th the house was dedicated by Rev. Peter Lowe, one of the pastors, who preached from Ex. xx., 24, last clause. The bell was put into position December 26; and, the next day, the associate pastor, Rev. Martinus Schoonmaker, preached.

"There were 55 pews disposed of, leaving still some for the commons," as was at first proposed. The church of 1794 had a steeple containing a bell (the same now in use). The old bell, bought in 1686, and weighing 22 lbs., was now taken by John Bailey of New York, at £5, 16s. 8d.; in part pay for the new bell of 458½ lbs. which cost £84, 15s. 2d. The building was lighted by five large windows on each side, and had a single entrance in the south side, or point. It was inclosed with a picket fence, a few feet from the building, on three sides; but having a post and rail fence at the rear. The church was painted a dull red color, and sanded while the paint was new. In later years the effort

was made to paint it white. Lombardy poplars were at the front and rear. The interior was ceiled with pine-stuff, rendered famous by the number of knots which showed their dark color through the paint. A relic of olden times, was the *Torn Stocks* and *Whipping Post*, which adorned the open space in front of the church near the burial-ground.

This church, like that of 1663, was destitute of heating apparatus until 1825, when 39 persons subscribed \$69, and a large wood stove was introduced. The old style of pulpit gave way in 1827, when 47 persons subscribed \$145.25, "as a New Year's gift toward building a New Pulpit in our church." Of these subscribers one still lingers, Jeremiah Ryder, in honored old age. Not to be outdone by the men, in March, 46 ladies subscribed \$63, "for dressing the New Pulpit." The pulpit was built by Jervis R. Woolsey, for \$132.75.

The church built in 1794 continued in use to 1848. The frame, which had become weakened, began to allow the side-walls to spread in a threatening manner, and strong iron rods failed to afford security. On May 31st, 1847, the consistory resolved to solicit funds for a new church, and \$3,817 were promised. The consistory associated Peter Debaun, John Holmes and Cornelius Kouwenhoven, with themselves as building committee; but, as they declined to serve, the pew-holders, by invitation of consistory, appointed (Feb. 3d, 1848) John Remsen, William Kouwenhoven and Jeronius Van Naysse, the Building Committee. The consistory confirmed this action. The church was built by day's work and principally by Henry J. Eldert. It was 63½ feet by 44½ feet, and was completed, together with the sheds and fences, at a cost of \$5,506.29. This house is still in use. When opened, it contained 66 pews, 58 of which were taken at once by families. In the winter of 1871 and 1872, side galleries were introduced, adding about 100 sittings; and the whole house, outside and inside, was repaired and repainted, at a cost of about \$3,500.

In 1853, Anne Terhune conveyed to the consistory a lot near the south-westerly corner of the church lot, on which to build a house for evening lectures and Sunday-school. This lot was enlarged afterward, by gift from Peter Lott, and Maria, his wife, to about 70 by 40 feet. In 1853 the ladies appropriated funds of the sewing society, and money collected by Mrs. Martha Woolsey, and others, and a building was erected by John S. Brown at a cost of \$1,300. R. Magaw, J. Williamson and T. Garretson (beside the consistory) were the building committee. This building has been added to, and is now 58 by 26 feet. The whole was, in 1881, put in prime order at a cost of \$350.

THE PASTORS of the Dutch Church of Flatlands under the collegiate system, from 1654, are given in the chapter on "*The Ecclesiastical History of Kings County, 1654-1800*." Of these, Mr. Van Sinderen (1746-1784) married, and acquired landed property in this town, and is the only one of the Kings County preachers



ers who resided and was buried here. Peter Lowe, (born in) Kingston, N. Y., 1764, was pastor of the collegiate churches 1787-1808. In the latter year Flatbush and Flatlands formed a union separate from the rest, and Dominie Lowe became pastor of these two churches alone. He died in 1818. Dominie Schoonmaker continued in the pastorate of all the churches till his death; Walter Monteith was called by Flatlands and Flatbush to his first charge in 1819. He remained only a year. The union between Flatlands and Flatbush closed with the departure of Mr. Monteith. In May, 1822, Flatbush called Rev. Thomas M. Strong, D.D. During 1823 a church building was begun in New Lots, and dedicated in July, 1824. The society there was part of the Flatbush congregation; but in August of 1824, the Classis of Long Island organized the New Lots people into a church, and during the following winter they formed a union with Flatlands. In February, 1825, Rev. William Cruikshank was settled as pastor of these united churches. It was during his pastorate that stoves and a modern pulpit were first used in the Flatlands Church. Mr. Cruikshank resigned in 1834, and died in 1854. On Jan. 18, 1836, a call by the churches of Flatlands and New Lots was made upon Rev. J. Abeel Baldwin, a clergyman of the Presbyterian Church, who continued a successful pastorate until June 9th, 1852, when he resigned. Mr. Baldwin still survives. The connection between Flatlands and New Lots Reformed Dutch Churches terminated with this pastorate, Nov. 24, 1852. Flatlands called Rev. John T. M. Davie; and, about the same time, New Lots called Rev. John M. Van Buren. Mr. Davie's pastoral and pulpit excellencies were highly appreciated, and were enjoyed until his sudden death, March 8, 1862. On August 4, 1862, the Church called Rev. T. Sanford Doolittle, who remained two years, when he was invited to a professorship in Rutgers College, which he still occupies. In May, 1865, Rev. Cornelius Brett, then a recent graduate of the New Brunswick Seminary, was called, and he continued the active and useful pastor of the church until Dec., 1869, when he resigned, having accepted a call to a Reformed Dutch Church in Newark, N. J. He is now pastor of the venerable Church of Bergen, Jersey City. Rev. Anson Du Bois became pastor in Dec., 1870, and still retains the position. The church now reports 80 families and 200 members.

**M. E. Church of Flatlands.**—The Methodist people had public preaching in the school-house of District No. 1 for about a year, when, in 1851, James Engle bought of Rem Hageman, a church site for them on Mill lane; and the present house was built, at a cost of \$2,700, by Mr. Youngs, of Flatbush. Mr. Engle was very active, but the early records of the church were lost, or withheld by his widow. The first preacher [1852-3] was Rev. Thos. H. Burch, now Presiding Elder of the New York District N. Y. East Conference. The parsonage lot was bought from John Corey, who had

purchased of Hageman, and the house was built by John Rumph, for \$2,300, in 1868. The society has been regularly supplied with preachers since its formation; and, though small, has been active and useful. It reports 80 members.

**Protestant Methodist Church of Canarsie.**—A Sunday-school of 23 scholars was organized at Canarsie in 1840, Ralph Van Houten, *Superintendent*. A Meth. Epis. Church was also constituted that year, of 12 members, and the meetings held in a private house until a small church costing \$500 was built at the corner of Old Road and Church Lane. About 1855 the church became Protestant Methodist, and so remains. The first church building was removed in 1870, and a larger one built upon the same ground. The Protestant Methodist Society has had the following *Pastors*: Revs. Fred. Dickerman, J. J. Smith, Joshua Hindson, John A. Morris, J. Serene, Robert Woodruff, Edwin Jones, R. S. Hulshart, John Painter, H. S. Hall, and J. H. Holden, the present pastor. The good influence of the church has been very marked. It is still growing, with an active pastor and membership.

**St. Matthew's Lutheran Church**, of Canarsie, of 32 members, was formed in August, 1879, and the corner stone of the church edifice was laid September 11th, 1879. The church cost \$4,000. Pastor Fladt, of East New York, served the new society six months; when Pastor Küver, the present incumbent, took charge. The Sunday-school numbers 70 scholars.

**German Evangelical Reformed Church of Canarsie.**—In March, 1876, Rev. C. Diekhout, of East New York, labored among the large German population of Canarsie; and, on the 19th of that month, held public worship in the German School-house. An organization was desired, and the South Classis of Long Island, March 29th, 1876, commissioned Revs. A. Du Bois, D.D., J. Hones and C. F. C. Suckow, and Elder John L. Ryder, to constitute a church there if found advisable. On June 5th, 1876, the committee met a large number of Germans, and a church of 72 members was formed. P. H. Koppf and Christian Schreiber were elected *Elders*, and Christian Quaritius and Henry Slumaker *Deacons*. The examination for membership and installation of the Consistory were conducted in German by Rev. Messrs. Hones and Suckow. Rev. C. Diekhout became pastor, and still remains such. The corner stone of a church was laid June 29th, 1877, and the building was dedicated November 4th, 1877, at a cost of \$5,000. There is a Sabbath-school of 60 pupils, with 150 volumes in the library. The pastor has mainly superintended the school. The church is self-supporting, prosperous and growing.

**The Common Schools of Flatlands.**—The common school in Flatlands probably began with the settlement itself. We have found no records touching it earlier than 1675, when it was evidently in a mature and vigorous career, under the care of the church elders





and was called "The School of the Town." The first notice we have of it is in regard to a supply of books by the deacons; and entries and bills, of elementary and religious books paid for, appear in their accounts from 1675 for a long period of years, along with every variety and order of expenses.

According to the tradition in our town, and the well-known usages of other Dutch settlements, the school-master was, by virtue of his office, Reader in church, Chorister, and commonly Sexton also. If this be true, we are able to name some of the honored leaders of mental progress in Flatlands from very early times.

The first who claims this honor is Wellem Gerretse (Van Kouwenhoven), 1675; the next Jan Brouwer, 1688; the third Pieter Tull, 1691, though the fact that he afterward became a pauper does not argue liberality of salary. Various items were paid "to the schoolmaster," for salary and other services, until 1704, when the incumbent was Martin Schenck, who was also a deacon of the church. Isaac Slover was teacher in 1712; Yan Sudam in 1715 and apparently to 1729; when Johannes Van Siggelen succeeded him. In 1733 Abraham de Lanoy occupied the place. His name would indicate that he was French, while his receipts for his salary of £6 a year are written in a bold and elegant English hand. He was doubtless able to teach in English. Isaac Voorhees held the place in 1742; Johannes Nevius in 1743; Abram Voorhees, 1744-47; Luykas Voorhees, from 1748 to 1752; when Derick Remsen served part of a year, and Luykas Voorhees again, 1755-1757. As no new name occurs, it is fair to infer that Voorhees continued to receive the annual salary of £4 from the deacons as chorister, and probably an additional sum from the elders as schoolmaster, until 1768; when he was succeeded by Abraham Voorhees, the same probably who had served in 1744-47, and who now held the position until 1792. This teacher first introduced a stove into the school-house in June, 1789, costing £12, 15s. 6d. We judge the previous winter must have been uncommonly cold, and they would no longer trust to an open fire, even though they had to bring in the stove in the first month of summer.

We have assumed that the *chorister* was also the school teacher, as was the universal custom of the Dutch. But the practice was now falling into disuse. It seems that Thomas Whitlock was employed during the latter years accredited to Abram Voorhees, and that John Baxter, whose journal of daily events, continued by his son Garret, extends from 1790 to 1840, taught the school about 1790. We have also the following as *Teachers*: Peter Labagh, 1792; Geo. Parker, 1795; Jas. Smith, 1798; Elijah Elwell, 1801; Patrick Noon and Hugh McGarron, 1802; John Burns and Alex. Johnson, 1804; — Cutlibert, 1805; — Cassidy, 1810; Hugh McGarron again 1811-16; Tibbets and Blundel taught a short time; James Bolton some years; Esterbrook, Bledsoe, Kingsley, Topping, and Leach;

Skatson to 1827, when Chas. Leach resumed and taught to 1830; Ed. Berry, 1830, when David Baldwin (whose conversion is recorded by his pastor in a tract of the American Tract Society) assumed charge, but retired from ill health; Albert Smith, 1831; Willis, and the same year H. D. Woodworth, now principal of a public school in Brooklyn; W. S. Webb, 1833; and after him E. S. Johnson and Stephen Voorhees; since whom Messrs. Sutton, Wade, Blake, and Sowles have taught.

The present painstaking and venerated Principal, Voorhees Overbaugh, took charge of this school in 1845. He was then expected to teach from 8 o'clock a. m. to 4 o'clock p. m., with a noon recess, five days each week, without a vacation of any kind during the whole year. He did not receive a stipulated salary, but a fee *per capita* on the scholars, and collected his own bills. But he has lived to see the results of his own toil, and more liberal appointments. His bow still "abides in strength," and his skill in teaching the young ideas is unimpaired. Mr. Overbaugh's assistants have been Miss Sarah M. Hendrickson, Simeon J. Brown, Miss Mary H. C. Lott, Miss Ella L. Overbaugh and Miss Louise Lush.

The original school-house of *District No. 1* probably stood on Hubbard's Lane, opposite John L. Williamson's. On February 2d, 1696-7, the heirs of Elbert Elbertse, viz., Garrett Stoothoff, Thos. Willes and Jan Van Duyckhuysen, deeded to Coert Stevens, Derick Amertman and Claes Peterse, for themselves and others, freeholders, etc., premises described as follows: "All that house and garden spot, as it is now in fence, lying \* \* \* in the town of flatlands, adjoining to the house and land of Ferdinand vanseklyn, and now used and occupied for a school-house for said town." Van Sickenlin lived at the southeast corner of the church-lot, where his son Johannes lived in 1747.

Confirmatory of this view is the fact that on the next day, viz., February 4th, 1697, the Stoothoff heirs, who seem to have been engaged in settling up the estate, conveyed to the same parties, "Elders of the Dutch Church of flatlands," the church-lot and burying-ground, and describe the latter as "Bounded north by Tinnis Janse's fence, south by the pound, west by the highway," with the church-lot at the east. Thus the whole of the present school-lot and burial-ground is included, without any mention of the school-house being then upon it, and excluding the Van Syckelen lands from contiguity. The evidence seems conclusive that the original school-house stood east from the residence of John B. Hendrickson.

A new school-house seems to have been built about this time. Between September, 1694, and August, 1697, the Deacons paid "for the school-house" in various items of material and work, no less a sum than \$654.40, which could not have been for repairs. Probably, at this time, the new school-house was placed on an unused part of the burial ground. The lot described



in 1696 as the school-house lot must, soon after this, have fallen into private hands, for, in 1729, it is decided by Abram Westervelt, and Margaret, his wife, to the Town, together with an acre where the house of B. Stafford now stands. We know that the school-house was near its present location in 1733, for in that year Pieter Wyckoff conveys "a certain piece of land adjoining the school-lot, being in breadth two rods and in length as far as the school-lot runs, bounded southerly by said school-lot, northerly by ground of said pieter Wyckof, westerly by the highway, and easterly by the land belonging to the church." The school-house first placed within the original lines of the grave-yard, in 1699, was extensively repaired about 1765, the work having been begun in 1762, simultaneously with the extensive improvements and enlargement of the church. At this time the sum of \$356 was paid for materials and work "for the school-house." In 1771 "a well for the school-house" cost £1, 11s. 3d.

In April, 1816, the town ordered a new school building. It was completed and occupied two years later, and the old house sold to Nicholas Schenck for \$20. This new building continued to be used by the school until 1861, when it was sold to John L. Ryder for a carriage-house. The school-lot was fenced in by the trustees, as such, in 1861, by advice of counsel. The building of 1861 was enlarged to more than twice its former capacity in 1876, and now affords ample space for four school departments.

*District No. 2* is located in Flatlands Neck. The present school-house was built, by subscription, in 1835, but the District was not regularly organized under the General School Law until 1843. A school had been taught, however, in that neighborhood for many years. As far back, indeed, as 1811, it seemed to have been a well established institution, and was then taught by Mr. Dean, licensed by John Baxter, as School Inspector. In 1813 John Kouwenhoven took charge; Mr. Wilson in 1817, Mr. Trumbull, 1818-1821; Messrs. Ephingstone and Wethersby to 1833. In that year Abram Van Keuren took charge, and he remained until 1850. After him were A. C. McLeod, L. C. Weld, W. C. Pilling, Alex. Smith, G. S. Smith, (A. Van) Keuren, G. D. Anderson, S. J. Brown, Geo. Forbes, J. M. Barr, and the present teacher, John L. Williamson.

*District No. 3*, at Canarsie, was organized August 21st, 1844, and reorganized November 13th, 1860, as a Union Free School District. By permission of the town, the school-house was built on a part of the burying-ground on the road to the shore. This was used till 1875, when a large and commodious school-house was completed. On September 2d, 1875, the school marched with martial music to their new building. The first teacher of this District was Rev. John A. Morris, who also preached on Sabbath. His successors were: C. W. Richardson, 1852; Wm. Clark, 1853; Clement Clark, 1855; F. B. Ladd and Dan. Mansfield for short

periods until 1860; J. A. Morris until 1867; John M. Barr till 1870, and after him Henry A. Harrison and E. L. G. Payne, the present Principal. The assistant teachers have been Miss Mary Abbie Morrison, Mrs. Elizabeth De Groot, Daniel Jepson, Mrs. Brown and Miss Jansen.

The office of *Town Superintendent of Schools*, while in vogue, was held by Wm. Kouwenhoven, Elias Hubbard, Cornelius B. Kouwenhoven, John L. Ryder and Rev. J. T. M. Davie. The office of *County Superintendent* was held the last term but one, next before the present incumbent, by Voorhees Overbaugh, the veteran Principal of the school in District No. 1.

**Sons of Temperance.**—Early in 1866, and mainly through the efforts of Rev. C. Brett, pastor of the Ref. Church, an application was made to the Grand Division, S. of T., Eastern N. Y., and a charter received as *Suburban Division No. 48, Sons of Temperance*. The charter members were Rev. C. Brett, J. L. Bergen, John Remsen, W. W. Kouwenhoven, Asher Anderson, G. D. Anderson, J. Fleunming, P. Kouwenhoven, Jr., J. D. Magaw, S. W. Remsen, G. Schenck, W. K. Remsen, W. H. Cornell, J. V. Brundage, Theo. Bergen and S. W. Stoothoof. The first meeting was held and officers installed May 21st, 1866. The meetings were held weekly and have continued uninterruptedly to the present time. The following have presided in the Division: J. L. Bergen, J. Remsen, G. Schenck, J. V. Brundage, A. D. Selover, L. H. Smith, W. W. Kouwenhoven, H. M. Hitchings, C. Bergen, C. Brett, G. D. Anderson, B. Bryan, H. Patou, G. S. Kouwenhoven, T. B. Woolsey, Miss Sarah Hendrickson, Elias Hendrickson, V. Overbagh, P. Remsen, N. Emmans and J. J. Van Wyck. The membership has steadily increased until it now numbers 60, mostly the young men of the village. The meetings are well attended, and the whole influence has been of an elevating character. When the society organized there were four rum-selling places in this part of the town. Now there is but one.

**Barren Island.**—The most southerly point of Flatlands is Barren Island, wholly composed of white sand and lying in the inlet of Jamaica Bay. Its length lay formerly north and south, but it now extends in greatest length east and west. The area of the island has very considerably decreased within the memory of persons now living; meanwhile, the point of Rockaway Beach has steadily extended westward several miles. Years ago the island was destitute of trees, producing only sedge, affording coarse pasture. Sixty years ago cedar trees sprung up over the island, furnishing a roosting-place for vast numbers of crows. Few trees now remain.

The Indian title was relinquished, according to the following deed, never before published:

Know all men, &c., that we, Wawmatt Tappa and Kack-a-washike, the right and true proprietors of a certain island called by the Indians Equendito, and by the English Broken Lands, lying, &c., &c., in consideration of two coats, one





kettel, one gun, one new trooper-coat, ten fathoms of wampum prage, three shirts, six pounds of powder, six bars of lead and a quantity of Brandie wine, already paid unto us by John Tilton, sen., and Samuel Spicer, of Gravesend, L. I., Do, &c., sell, &c., the said Island called Equendito, &c., with all our right \* \* \* both of upland and marshes, any way belonging thereto, as the Straum Beach or Beaches, as namely that running out more westerly, with the Island adjoining, and is at the same time by the ocean sea wholly inclosed, called hoopaninak and Shanscomacoecke and macuteris, as also all the harbors, &c., to the said John Tilton and Samuel Spicer \* \* \* excepting only to ourselves the one-half of all such whale-fish that shall by wind and storms be cast upon the said Island. In witness whereof we have set our hands this 13 day of the 3 month, called May, Anno, 1664.

BAMBRAS, als <sup>mark</sup> *Qy* WAWAMATT TAPPA.

KACHA-WASHKE <sup>mark</sup> *5*

Acknowledged and subscribed in presence of Cawmenorke,

Orawase, Anascorah, Poundgar, Mawascorhere, John <sup>his</sup> **M** Wil-  
son, Obediah Wilkins, Pieter Tilton. <sup>mark</sup>

This original Indian deed bears an assignment by Tilton and Spicer, dated "the 2d day of the 3d month, called May, 1681, to Elbert Elbertsonn, his heirs," etc.

The island was of little value for many years, only affording a scant pasture for young cattle and colts. A rude house at the east end, where fishermen and sportsmen were entertained, was occupied about the close of the last century by one Dooley, who was called "The King of the Island." Afterwards this house was kept by Johnson, with whom Gibbs, the pirate, and his associates lodged, in 1830 (after burying a large number of Mexican dollars in the sand), the night before their arrest at Sheepshead Bay. (See History of Town of Gravesend). A Yankee named Cherry, with his large family, lived in a dug-out at the west end for a long time, until he succeeded to the public house, which he kept as late as 1860.

In 1835 the island was held in undivided fifths by the following parties: 1, Peter Voorhees and Eliza Ann Voorhees; 2, Isaac and John Terhume; 3, Geo. Lott; 4, H. I. Lott; 5, Nelson Shaw. Geo. Lott dying in January of that year, the island, in June, was divided in severalty, except the western end, a part of which was known as "Pelican Beach." About 1842 the channel shifted so as to cut off this beach, and by the filling up of the old channel, called "Plum Gut," it became a part of Coney Island, and is now occupied by the Manhattan Beach Improvement Company.

Meantime the fortunes of the island advanced. A bone-boiling establishment was erected on the north side about 1845 by Wm. B. Reynolds. It was occupied afterwards by Frank Swift. To this, dead animals from New York and Brooklyn were brought. This factory was blown down and a new one erected in 1866 by R. Recknagle. A previously built factory near the same

site had been burnt. At the present time, the great *Rendering and Fertilizer Factory of P. White & Sons* is the successor of these establishments. It was built in 1868 and burnt in 1878; hence the five present buildings are new. They cover, with dockage, about four acres. Thirty dead animals are received daily, and render their last service to humanity. Every part of the animal, to the last flake of hair, goes to its appropriate use. About 2,000 tons of fertilizers are produced annually, of four general sorts, viz.: phosphates, bone dust, guano substitutes and combinations adapted to particular crops. Cleanliness and care to prevent offensive smells are constant, and are rewarded with fair success; and, if the success is not all that is desirable, it would be hard to find a better place for doing this necessary work in disposing of dead animals.

The largest concern on the island is *E. Frank Coe's Fertilizer Factory*, at the west end, established in 1877. An immense building, 360x224 feet, with yards and dock, affords ample space. A 160 horse power engine and 80 men (sometimes more) are employed. The materials used in preparing fertilizers for market are Peruvian guano from Curaco, bone dust, in part from the sugar refineries of the cities, Charleston stone, and menhaden scraps from the fish-rendering establishments on this island. One and a half tons of sulphuric acid are consumed daily, and from 40 to 50 tons of phosphates are daily made ready for use. The makers find it difficult to supply their orders, mostly from the south.

The *fish-oil factories* of Barren Island are interesting institutions. There are five of them, though one is idle at present. The first was built by *Smith & Co.* on the north side of the island, about 1860. In 1868 *Fantine Coon*, who had worked with Smith, built on the east end, and carried on the concern some six years; when it was bought by *Louis C. De Homage, M. D.*, who continues it and has built a new factory near the old one. Steam power is used and about 40 men and three steamers are employed. The establishment can handle half a million of fish daily.

The *Barren Island Menhaden Company* occupies premises near the above. Oscar O. Freedlander, 36 Broadway, N. Y., is managing director. This factory was begun in 1868, by Goodkind Brothers, who, like Coon, had been with Smith. It occupies three buildings, each 100x70 feet; employs three steamers in fishing, an engine of 40 horse power and about 50 men. The company can handle one and a half millions of fish in a single day, but 2,000,000 per week is considered a fair average catch.

The fish-rendering factory of *Jones & Co.*, at the west end, is of about the capacity of the one just described.

The *Harkins Brothers' Fish Oil, and Fish Guano Factory*, was built at the west end in 1869. Steam power, fifty men and three steamboats are employed



from May 1st to the middle of November. About 20,000,000 fish are worked up annually, producing about 80,000 gallons of oil.

We may here give a brief account of this industry. The fish used are almost exclusively the menhaden or "mossbunker," an oily and bony species unfit for food; and long used in the natural state for manure. They pass up the Atlantic coast in immense shoals and are dipped into by fishermen with long seines. Formerly sailing vessels, but now steamers, each with a crew of 12 men and two foss boats, each 20 feet long, are used. The net swoops in a vast number of fish, which are hoisted into the vessel's hold; and when this is full they are brought to the factory wharf, thrown

in a measuring tub and thence into strong wooden tubs for boiling. The boiling is done by admitting steam, and then they are placed in perforated boiler-iron casks, and the oil is separated by hydraulic pressure. The oil is used by tanners, in making ship-cordage, and in various other ways; and the refuse fish are dried on board-plank forms, of one or two acres in extent, and sold at the phosphate factories on the island.

This industry employs at the island some 350 men and a fleet of 10 steamers. Altogether there are employed in all the works not less than 500 men. A district school is maintained; a regular ferry connects with Canarsie, and several of the factories are connected with their New York offices by telephone.

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